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ASSERT Final Report-Sept. 1993 -- Aug 1996

AFOSR GRANT:F9620-93-1-0469

Principal Investigator: William A. Yost, PhD, Parmly Hearing Institute, Loyola University Chicago, Chicago IL, 60626. Students: Tony Grange (1993-94); Sandra Guzman (1994-96)

ASSERT Final Progress Report - August 1996

AFOSR GRANT:F9620-93-1-0469

Principal Investigator: William A. Yost, PhD, Students: Tony Grange (1993-94); Sandra Guzman (1994-96)

Objectives: To better understand the role of binaural processing in complex multi-sound source acoustic environments.

Status of Effort:

- a) Support received from AFOSR Grant Number F49620-93-j-0489.
- b) No graduate students supported from Grant F49620-93-j-0489 prior to 1993.
- c) No graduate students supported from Grant F49620-93-j-0489 from 1993 o 1996
- d) One graduate student, Tony Grange, was supported by the ASSERT grant in academic year 1993-94, and one Student, Sandra Guzman, was supported by the ASSERT grant in academic years 1994-95 and 1995-96.

Accomplishments/New Findings:

Dr. Tony Grange was supported by the ASSERT grant until his graduation in 1995, when he took a Postdoctoral position at the University of Conneticut Medical Center. Dr. Grange work on the topic of binaural pitch, sometimes called Huggins pitch. He showed that this pitch, while mediated by purely binaural comparisons behaved in many ways similar to traditionally derived monaural pitches. For instance, he showed that the one dichotic pitch can "mask" another pitch if the two have similar pitch values. But, he also showed that dichotic pitches were influenced by spectral energy in far removed spectral regions in ways that monaural pitches are not. He developed a cross-correlation model to account for many of these dichotic pitch data. In this model, there is a wideband prefilter which appears consistent with other studies of binaural processing.

Miss Sandra Guzman was supported by the ASSERT grant during the last year as a PhD student working on her doctoral degree in Psychology in the Parmly Hearing Institute of Loyola University Chicago. Miss Guzman is working on a project involving the localization of sound sources in reverberant environments, a topic often referred to as the precedence effect. Several recent investigators have shown that the ability of the auditory system to suppress acoustic information from reflected surfaces (echoes) is liable and depends on the listener's immediate prior exposure to the acoustic environment. A simple experiment demonstrates this effect. A train of brief stimuli are presented so that one sound in the train comes on from a loudspeaker as if this loudspeaker was the source of the sound. A few milliseconds later a second loudspeaker is presented the same sound as if this second loudspeaker produced an echo. Under the proper

conditions listeners only perceive the sound coming from the source loudspeaker indicating that the sound from the echo loudspeaker has been suppressed. If after presenting many such stimulus pairs in this train the location of the source and echo are reversed (that is, the loudspeaker that was presenting the echo now suddenly presents the first or source sound and vice a versa for the loudspeaker producing the echo), listeners immediately hear sounds from both loudspeakers indicating that echo suppression has ceased. After a few seconds, the listener again hears only one sound and it is at the location of the new source. Miss Guzman has developed a new procedure for studying these precedence effects. This new procedure allows her to study many echoes and the spatial relationships between the source and echoes. To date she has been developing and refining the procedure and she has shown that in general any change in the listener's acoustic environment which would not be plausible in a real world acoustic situation causes a temporary break down in echo suppression. This can occur for as many seven echoes.

Personnel Supported: Tony Grange, Ph Student earning his degree in 1995; Sandra Guzman, PhD Student

Publications (involving Tony Grange and Sandra Guzman and/or Dr. Yost): 1993

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Consultative: none by Tony Grange or Sandra Guzman (William A. Yost, Science Advisory Board of the House Ear Institute, Los Angles)

Transitions: none

Inventions/patents: NONE

Honors/Awards: none by Tony Grange or Sandra Guzman (William A. Yost, Fellow American Speech Language and Hearing Association, 1995, William A. Yost, Fellow American Association for the Advancement of Sciences, 1996)